Bosnians in Bowling Green

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This year’s International Year of program at WKU focuses on Bosnia Herzigovina, a country whose immigrants make up nearly ten percent of Bowling Green’s population.

Amy Bingham shows how the stories are coming to life in this week’s View from the Hill.

Since last fall there have been numerous events and exhibits highlighting the Bosnian culture. It’s a topic near and dear to so many in our area forced to flee here when war tore through the nation formerly known as Yugoslavia.

“I didn’t want to believe it because I was not ready. I wanted to go to my prom.”

In 1992 Sadata Hotzik was a senior in high school when she was forced to leave her home in Bosnia.

“I was not in the war. I didn’t see killings, I didn’t see nothing bad happened. But a lot of bad stuff happened to my family members. “

“I remember telling my girlfriends in my village I’ll be back.”

But Sadata never went back. After spending seven years in Germany, she and her young son Denis were forced to either go back to Bosnia or come to the United States. They wound up in Bowling Green.

“I don’t remember going through customs, I don’t remember landing at the airport but I do remember pulling up at our apartment on Glen Lily road at ten at night.”

“I had a huge huge culture shock…huge.”

Today the Hodzic’s story is one of several featured in an exhibit at the Kentucky Museum called “A Culture Carried, Bosnians in Bowling Green.”

“The day I walked in I had tears in my eyes. It’s done beautifully , they didn’t leave anything out. Everything that needs to be told about our country.”

Denis is a 2017 Honors graduate from WKU. He says it was rewarding to help work on the exhibit and make people aware of what Bosnians in this community went through.

“Business partners , doctors, lawyers, engineers we’re here in the community but people don’t know our story.”

4:56 “One thing that was central to what was going on in Bosnia and the war was , other than politically motivated. , they tried to erase our identity.”

One of many stories of Bosnians like Sadata seeking a better life for their family.

“I never regret it never.”

“I want him to have a good life.”

You can still check out the Bosnia exhibit at the Kentucky Museum until June 30th. Another Bosnian exhibit opens tonight at Spencers Coffee in Bowling Green.

For a complete list of events for International Year of Bosnia-Herzegovina, log onto wku.edu slash IYO.

With this week’s View from the Hill, I’m Amy Bingham.

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